J. Redlich S-3 (no date) 1936 EG1 Albania EG1

Korça, Berat and Vlona, the Orthodox are also numerous.

The Albanian Orthodox Church came into existence in 1922, after the Congress of Berat, with the consent of the Patriarch of Constantinople. This Church has four metropolitans: Durazzo, Berat, Argyrocastro and Korça. The Roman Catholic Apostolic Delegate and Archbishop are at Scutari, and there are five Catholic bishoprics scattered throughout the country.

It is known that Christianity came early to Albania for St. Paul says, "Round about Illyria have I fully preached the Gospel of Christ." The Albanians claim him as the first missionary among them.

Although religion is a strong force with the Albanians, it does not interfere with their patriotism and powerful nationalism. In the face of a demand on their loyalty Moslem, Roman Catholic and Albanian Orthodox become brothers in one cause.

It can be said that Albania is the only country in Europe where there is no religious dissension; they have always remained united at every period of their national history.

3: Redlich S-3 (no date) 1936 EG1 Albania EG1

SCUTARI

175 395 A.D., when this district passed from the East Roman Empire into the increasing power of Byzantium. From this period on into the Middle Ages, Scutari fought one invader after another in an effort to retain its integrity. First the Serbs were repulsed and then the Turks. In the early fifteenth century, the Venetians gained possession of Scutari and the surrounding territory, but it was not long until the Turks were again at the citadel of Scutari, and for ten long, dreary months, 1478-79, Scutari withstood the armies of Sultan Mohammed II, and finally was brought under Turkish rule but remained unconquered.

During the Balkan war, Scutari was the last city to withstand the Turks. Until January 29, 1912, Vali (Governor) Hassan Riza was able to hold and protect Scutari against the Serbs and Montenegrins, and afterwards Essad Pasha Toptani took over the command with his avaricious and ambitious schemes for personal glorification. The attacks of the Montenegrins and Serbs continued until April 22, 1913.

175 A Roman Catholic Archbishopric is established in Scutari.

KORÇA

000 colored stones, giving the residences an appearance of wealth.

775 Korça is now[1] the residence of the head of the Albanian Orthodox Church.

769 The local hero of Korça is one Themistokli Gërmeni.

167 About 70% of the Albanian immigrants to other countries come from Korça.

361 Korça is two and a half hours by automobile from Florina, Greece, where the railroad comes from Salonica northward. Thus making Korça the point nearest to railway connection.

1[Errata: should be was until recently. Cf. Errata sheet, p. 269, cat. 116 -- Analyst]

4: Garnett B-4, 5 (ca. 1880) 1891
EG1 Albania EG1

798 riddled with balls. The tribe of the Schialla, having heard of this insult to their religion, prepared to take
798 vengeance for it; but, the offenders being out of reach,
579 they made the family of Bobi, to which the bride
628 belonged, responsible. The Bobi engaged to obtain satisfaction within a week, or pay the penalty, and on the morrow the young men of the family set off for Bugna, where they killed two nephews of Tahir Mala. Not content, however, with this retribution, they entered the mosque, where they killed a pig, rubbed the doors with its blood, and placed the head on the ledge of the pulpit.

The Moslems, at this profanation of their mosque, hastened to complain to Mustapha Pasha, of Skodra, who prepared to send a military expedition against the Bobi. The latter, with the rest of the Schialla tribe, placed themselves under the protection of the Miridite Prince, Prenk Doda, who threatened the Pasha that, if troops were sent against the Schialla, he would not only support them, but call all the Christian highlanders to arms. The Pasha, alarmed at the prospect of a religious war for which he would be held responsible, then agreed to let the insulted cross atone for the polluted mosque, and cry quits with the Christians.

795 The number of Albanians affiliated to the Bektashi Order of Dervishes is said to be no fewer than 80,000. The lax observance of even the outward forms of Islam, characteristic of the followers of Hadji Bektash generally, is more especially observable in the conduct of the Skipetars, and has occasionally subjected them to persecution from their Osmanli Moslem neigh-

4: Garnett B-4, 5 (ca. 1880) 1891
EG1 Albania EG1

bours. One of their chief offences, in the eyes of the strictly orthodox, is the scant attention paid by the wives of these sectarians to the law of *namekhram*, or wearing the veil, it being their practice to appear unveiled before their husband's friends when he gives them permission to do so.

Cloistered life is not more popular with the women of Albania than with those of the rest of Turkey. In Islam there is, of course, no such resource for disappointed maidens, and marriage being as much the rule among Christians, whether orthodox Greek or Roman Catholic, as among Moslems, nunneries are not numerous, and their inmates are but few. Those which exist, however, offer a welcome asylum to the small section of women whom circumstances have doomed to a life of celibacy, and who the more willingly enter them as they, by so doing, acquire a degree of liberty which could never be theirs while living as unmarried women in the house of their father or brother. For in the East, as I have before remarked, convent rule is remarkably lax, and, beyond attending the prescribed church services, no very strict account is required of the way in which the good sisters spend their time. If report speaks true, they do not always refrain from making use of the opportunities for flirtation afforded them by their emancipation from conventional restraint.

6: Lane T-3 (no date) 1923 EG1 Albania EG1

POSTSCRIPT

000 human, for few of us are accurately just to our enemies, and the Hungarian, Austrian, Serbian, Italian, and Greek soldiers who have campaigned in Albania have returned to describe the country as hell with variations. The one European who has spoken to me of the Albanians without horror is a doctor in Budapest. He had worked in Serbia during the war, and there had encountered a terribly wounded Albanian still alive on a battlefield. The doctor bent over him to examine his wounds, and the Albanian bit off the doctor's little finger.

"I cannot think of that man without admiration," said the doctor, looking thoughtfully at his mutilated hand. "I can't blame him for this; I had not spoken to him, and he thought I was an enemy. He was a splendid fellow—stood the most frightful agony without a murmur, and kept his spirit like a lion. I did what I could for him—had no hope of saving him—and that night, wounded as he was, he got away. I hope he reached home alive. Some day I'm going to see Albania."

795 I spoke of Albanians as a Christian minority in the old Turkish Empire. One of the most frequent errors about Albania is the belief that it is Mohammedan; this report has been used for political propaganda. The Albanians became Christians before the Roman conquest, and were Christians when they were subjugated by Turkey. They remained Christian without exception until after the death of George Kastriotes—

6: Lane T-3 (no date) 1923 EGl Albania EGl

POSTSCRIPT

known in European history by his Turkish name of Iskander Bey Scanderbeg—who successfully revolted against Turkey and maintained Albanian independence for twenty-five years, defeating the Turks in thirteen great battles and innumerable small ones. After his death in 1467 some of the chiefs of the central mountain tribes, exhausted by a quarter century of war and confronting fresh Turkish armies, purchased their actual independence by a verbal submission and became nominally Mohammedan. When the Bechtaski sect—which may roughly be said to bear the relation to Islam that the Methodist bears to the Church of Rome—rose in Turkey, it found its most fertile ground among these Mohammedan Albanians. The northern mountain tribes have always remained Roman Catholic, and southern Albania Greek Catholic.

None of these creeds, however, have affected national unity—Albania is the only Balkan country in which religion and nationality are not synonymous—and all of them are rooted shallowly above the old religion of Albanians, which is the formless belief in a Great Unknown from which sprang the gods and mythology of ancient Greece. In southern Albania you will still hear the people taking oath *per kete djelle eghe per kete hene* (by the power of the sun and the moon). You will still hear them calling upon Zeus—Zaa or Zee, the Voice—and upon Athena—E Thana, The Intelligence. In the north, the Catholic mountaineer greets the rising sun with the sign

795 • [197] 771 184 [See cat. 795, pp. [293] 292-293 -- Analyst]

10:Hasluck F-5 (1926-1939)1954 EGl Albania EGl

or incapacitated, one of his wife's relatives must come for her and bring her back, but that meant the extra trouble of letting them know that she was coming.

Each member of a household had a personal name. Though this was usually determined by the religion professed, Moslem first names were not uncommon among the Catholics. The usual cause seems to have been no more than a personal whim. Thus the junior bajraktar ('standard-bearer')[1] of Shalë, a Catholic, was called Avdi because his father was very friendly with a Moslem of that name at the time of his birth. Another interesting anomaly is found in the forty-three Orthodox villages of Shpat, near Elbasan, where the older men have two names, a Moslem one for public use and an Orthodox one for private. For some decades before Albania freed herself from Turkish rule these villages were pressed by the Moslems of Elbasan to abandon Christianity and, to save their faith and lives, camouflaged themselves as Moslems, giving themselves Moslem names, keeping the Ramazan fast, and so on, but evading circumcision. At intervals they fetched an Orthodox priest from Elbasan under cover of night so that in some dark stable he might marry the newly wed with Christian rites and baptize the newly born. So, to name only two examples, the apparently Moslem Tahir Baduri of Shelcan and Ymer Tullumi of Bujars are really the Christian Spiro Baduri and Vasil Tullumi. Religious persecution having ended when Albanian independence was attained, the Orthodox of Shpat shed their Moslem camouflage and gave only Christian names to their children. If Godolesh, the picturesque village north of Elbasan, had managed to hold out for only two years more against the pressure to 'turn Turk', it, too, might now still have been Christian. It failed to hold out, so that its middle-aged and young inhabitants are fanatical Moslems but the old still visit Orthodox churches in secrecy and grieve that they must lie in a Moslem grave. One sturdy old woman, who married soon after the conversion to Islam, boasted that she had had all her four sons baptized. One of them confirmed this to the author, saying he had often been told by Christian and Moslem alike that he smelt less than did other Moslems, an agreeable peculiarity which he attributed to his baptism. The Greeks too, who introduced Orthodox Christianity into Albania, subscribed to the belief that baptism takes away the smell from which all Moslems suffer.

[1] See Chapter XI.

10:Hasluck F-5 (1926-1939)1954 EGl Albania EGl

428 592 Alternatively, both sitting-room and kitchen were measured with a rope and divided into two. A partition wall of lath and plaster or, more probably, of lath and mud was then run up in both. This left half of each with the old door and, where it existed, the old staircase, while the other two halves had neither door nor staircase; a new door and, if required, a new staircase, were built for these, generally on the opposite side of the house. Each brother then took possession of his new home, a small poor place but his own with its own egress to the outside world.

[562] [795] In the Mohammedan villages near Elbasan there were regulations about windows which aimed, like the building laws, at protecting women from prying eyes. In Godolesh the brother getting the upper room in a two-storeyed house was told to blind the windows overlooking the yard if his brother's kitchen, as was probable, opened on to this; otherwise his brother's womenfolk would not have full freedom to move about the yard. The brother getting the middle storey in a three-storeyed house was given similar instructions, but the brother with the topmost floor might leave all his windows open as they were too high to overlook the yard. In Labinot all windows overlooking another's property must, irrespective of their height, be blinded. Such regulations were not enforced in Christian villages.

When the old house had two rooms as well as a kitchen the division was less complicated. To begin with, one room was assigned to each brother. If one was bigger than the other they were both valued and due compensation paid to the brother with the smaller one. As for the kitchen, either it was divided in two or it was given to one brother and its estimated value paid to the other so that he could build a new kitchen for himself on his own land.

Continuing to live under the same roof imposed certain mutual obligations on the brothers. If the flimsy partition wall or the roof needed repairs, both must share the expense in equal proportions. If one could not or would not pay his quota the other was entitled to repair only his own section of the roof, leaving his brother's to the ravages of the weather; or he might try to extract the money from his brother by force; until lately, he might even shoot him in truculent Lumë. As for the partition wall, he probably repaired it at his own expense for the sake of his personal privacy.

To avoid such quarrels and to secure more houseroom the buying out method of dividing the old home was preferred. The

10: Hasluck F-5 (1926-1939)1954 EGl Albania EGl

Shalë but only as trustee for the small son of Lush Prela, his predecessor, killed some years before.

Succession from father to son depended on merit, and was determined in the lifetime of the reigning bajraktar. A son who was obviously unfit was passed over in favour of his younger brother. Both, if unfit, might be superseded by their paternal uncle or cousin in the male line.

If the natural precedence between brothers was once lost, the bajrak generally passed from the elder's heirs for good. Only when the son of a dispossessed elder brother turned out much more competent than the other heirs of his generation could he regain the glory which his father's weakness had lost. For example, Muharrem Bajraktar, the standard-bearer of Ujmishtë, Lumë, was the son of Nezir Bajraktar, a younger son. His cousin, Liman, son of the elder brother to whom Nezir was preferred, was almost as capable as he was but had no right to compete with him for the succession.

For grave cause the claims of heredity were sometimes disregarded. If a bajraktar's family produced no competent male for several generations, another family might wrest the standard from its feeble hands. The transfer had naturally to be approved by the tribe. Muharrem Bajraktar of Ujmishtë, Lumë, descended not from the original bajraktar who lived at Shkavec, Lumë, but from the family which superseded the feckless descendants of the original man some generations ago. The first bajraktar of Nikç was Gilë Prëntashi, but eventually the family degenerated to such an extent that the bajrak was taken over by Turk Vuksani, a very distant cousin who lived in the same quarter as the natural heir. A more remarkable transfer took place early in this century in Perlat. For three generations there had not been a good male in the family of its bajraktar. Then Prenk Pasha, consulted as the head of the Gjomarkaj family of Mirditë and therefore the source of all wisdom, advised Perlat to desert its inadequate leader for his sister's son, the bajraktar of the neighbouring tribe of Rrshen. Perlat took the advice and followed this man and after him his son Zef Bardhoku, thus going right outside the tribe in the quest for a better leader.

With the exception of the bajraktar[1] of Lumë, all bajraktars hitherto discussed were military leaders of tribes which were wholly or predominantly Catholic. Mirditë, Bogë, Vukël, Shalë, Nikaj,

[1] [the tribe military leader -- Analyst]

10:Hasluck F-5 (1926-1939)1954 EGl Albania EGl

Mertur and some others were wholly Catholic. Nikç, Selcë, Hot, Kthellë and Lurë were more or less mixed Catholic and Mohammedan. Certain tribes such as Has, Bytyç and Krasniq are at the time of writing completely Mohammedan but were partly Catholic until three or four generations ago, as their genealogies testify. Lumë asserts that it has been completely Mohammedan since the coming of the Turks five centuries ago. It was also not fully tribal, since each bajraktar's following consisted not of a single kin or agglomeration of kins with the same ancestors, but of a number of little kins of varying ancestry.

There were also bajraktars in certain non-tribal areas, such as Shpat and Martanesh in central Albania. Here the dignity was not hereditary and localized, but moved with successive holders from family to family, from quarter to quarter or even from village to village. Fitness for military leadership of the local levies was always demanded, and that quality did not necessarily remain from one generation to another, in the same family, quarter or village. Hysejn Zavolina of the village of Shelcan was a famous bajraktar in Shpat in the last years of Turkish rule, but it was at Fushë e Kuqe in the more central village of Gjinar that he set up his standard. Hysejn Ramaj became bajraktar of Martanesh because he was as popular as he was competent. After having carried his standard to victory in Montenegro he 'got religion' and turned dervish. As Baba Hysejn (Abbot Hysejn) he presided first over the Bektashi monastery (tege) at Krujë and then over that at Martanesh and was buried in the monastery of Zerqan. When he took to the cloister the bajrak passed to Murat Xhabolli, who was from the Gjoni quarter and quite a different family. The great lawgiver, Mus Ballgjini, of the village of Gurakuq was bajraktar of the district of Çermenikë when Turkish rule over Albania ended, but his son did not inherit the office. When Albania developed a conscript army of European type, there could be no more bajraktars in central Albania. Officers led the conscripts, and there was no hereditary principle to preserve the ancient title as there was among the tribes of the north.

In certain areas of the north there were no bajraktars[1] Since beys were feudal lords of the soil it fell to them to lead their henchmen in war. So wherever there were beys of any importance there were no bajraktars. Mat was the classic instance. There were bajraktars to the north of it in tribal Kthellë and Lurë; there were

[1] [the local military leader --Analyst]

10:Hasluck F-5 (1926-1939)1954 EGl Albania EGl

695 778 Tirana, Sheikh Hasan's at Nangë in Lumë, Sheikh Ibrahim's at Surroj across the river Drin from Nangë, Sheikh Fejza's at Bulqizë, Balim Sulltan's at Martanesh, and those of two abbots at Krujë. Sulejman Pasha and Sheikh Ibrahim lie in an isolated mausoleum, Balim Sulltan in a cave, and the others in monasteries. These saints belonged to different sects; Sulejman Pasha, the soldier who founded Tirana in the seventeenth century, was a Sunni; Sheikh Hasan, founder of the monastery at Nangë, and his brother, Sheikh Ibrahim of Surroj, were Khalvetis; Balim Sulltan of Martanesh and the two abbots of Krujë were Bektashis; and Sheikh Fejza, founder of the monastery at Bulqizë, a dissident Bektashi. Sometimes it did not matter to what sect the buried saint belonged. Sheikh Hasan of Nangë was so renowned that the local population, even if not Khalvetis, took their oaths on his grave and never in the mosque, and Catholic as well as Moslem oath-takers came in serious cases to his grave from Shkodër, four days away. Sulejman Pasha's grave drew oath-takers from as far away as Martanesh; these had long since forgotten his history, and, though ardent Bektashis, did not care that he was a Sunni. Sunni Albanians are not so liberal however; taught to abhor the Bektashis as unorthodox Moslems, they left the graves of Balim Sulltan of Martanesh and the two abbots of Krujë to Bektashi oath-takers. Sheikh Fejza, abhorred by Sunnis as almost a Bektashi and by Bektashis as a backslider from their faith, commanded allegiance only among his own followers in Bulqizë. Oaths used to be taken in three mausolea in the Bektashi monastery at Krujë, but by 1930 the abbot refused to open one for such a purpose. Once, as an oath was being taken in this mausoleum, both disputants fell dead; there had been roguery on both sides as the buried saint was quick to detect. Ever afterwards the abbots restricted oath-takers to the two mausolea in which the saints seemed slower to wrath.

695 782 Among invocations of the Deity used in oaths, the following are recorded: 'By the Lord' (Perlat and Shkrel); 'By this Lord Who gave me life' (Perlat); 'By this Lord Who is in Heaven' (Shalë); 'By Our Lady' (Shkrel); and 'By the Blood of Christ' (Shalë). In all these the influence of the Church is evident, but there are hints in the Albanian originals that some are older than the Church.

The Deity was invoked by Moslems as follows: 'By that Lord' (Godolesh); 'By God' (Dibër); 'By God, with God, from God'[1]

[1] *Vallahi, billahi, tallahi.*

6: Shuster S-4 (no date) 1954 El Europe
Albania EGI

198 one surmise that the Communists have tried to neutralize the Moslem population by breaking it up into mutually hostile factions. It is known that purges of Mohammedan leaders who were insufficiently cooperative have occurred. Islam is today divided into several sects. Hoxha's aides sought first to play one of these against another, and selected the strongest, the *Bektashi*, for the role of principal collaborator; but there ensued a weird series of assassinations, or purges, impossible to interpret. All we really know is that government broadcasts beamed to the Near East stress that Albania demonstrates the ability of Communism to carry out its program successfully while granting complete freedom of faith to Mohammedans. The names of some Moslem leaders who have perished are known, as is that of Hafiz Musa Hashi Alija, who is currently cast in the precarious role of chief adviser to the government on Islamic matters.

●795 659 News concerning the fate of the Orthodox Church is also much more fragmentary than one could desire. Historically, in Albania, this Church was free of strong confessional ties with Constantinople and Athens, and from time to time some of its leaders took under serious advisement the possibility of reunion with Rome. Accordingly Communist efforts after 1945 to "nationalize" Orthodoxy and to foster its allegiance to Moscow met with resistance. It was not until January, 1948, that a small delegation of the clergy visited Moscow, Kiev, and Leningrad. The official press reported that the head of this group had expressed, in behalf of his colleagues, the view that the "strength of the Russian Church" would insure protection against "all the other Churches, and particularly the Vatican," which might seek to "absorb and destroy the Albanian Church." During the same year, a Russian bishop visited Tirana, Albania's capital city; and the Orthodox Church Conference of that year convened in Moscow. This

?: Amery G-6 (1943-44) 1948 EG1 Albania EG1

trying their values by the acid test of survival. Nor were they[1] isolated from the world around them; for the tides of invasion that swept through their valleys, and the cross-currents of foreign intrigue which penetrated into their mountains continually refreshed them with new ideas. Some of them, moreover, travelled to the ends of the earth in the service of their conquerors, to act, on their return, as a ferment among their fellow countrymen. Likewise the three religions which they honoured — the Roman Catholic, the Orthodox, and the Moslem — were powerful vehicles for the spread of foreign influences, whether from Pope or Patriarch or Sheikh-Ul-Islam.

These religions represented traditional loyalties rather than living creeds to the Albanians. Indeed religious devotion and ideological fervour were alike alien to them, being based on social concepts inapplicable to the anarchy in which they lived. In the past, when politics had been conducted under the sign of religion, they had freely apostatised to secure material advantage. Likewise, in our time, they variously proclaimed themselves Fascists, Communists, or Democrats, in obedience to the calculations of interest rather than to the dictates of conviction. The growth among them of the Bektashi sect suggested that, left to themselves, their religious instinct might have developed towards some form of Pantheism, perhaps in the tradition of the Oracle of Dodona and the hierarchy of gods which Hellas inherited from the ancient Illyrians. Instead, the contemplation of the endless struggle for survival and power which characterised every phase of their daily life induced in them an all-pervading materialism. In ideas they discerned but the banners under which forces are gathered; and they mistrusted words as a cloak for intentions rather than as a means for their expression.

Politics they understood instinctively, for the relations between the Great Powers were daily made manifest to them in terms of golden coin and leaden shot. Besides, where there is no law, all human relationships are understood in terms of the struggle for power which underlies them and which is the very stuff of politics. The life of the clans was indeed a great school of *realpolitik*; and though the Albanians are few the fertility

[1] [the Albanians -- Analyst]

7: Amery G-5 (1943-44) 1948 EG1 Albania EG1

from the baroque splendours of Lecce and the bourgeois pleasures of its black-market restaurant.

2

We rose at daybreak and emerged from the sheepfold to find ourselves on the edge of a broad grassland plateau set in an amphitheatre of rock peaks. This was broken only towards the east, where a wooded gorge led down towards the village of Shengyerg. The scene was impressive but desolate; for, although the thaw was far advanced, there was at this height but little sign of spring. Moreover, such snow as still remained, mostly on the higher slopes and in ravines seldom reached by the sun, was everywhere thickly powdered with grey dust. This phenomenon was widely observed that year in the Western Balkans and was attributed by scientists to a recent eruption of Vesuvius, four hundred miles away.

We breakfasted off hard-boiled eggs and presently set out towards the valley with an escort of a dozen of the guerillas. We went slowly, for we were not yet in training, and, after some four hours' walk across the plateau and down the gorge leading from it, came out on to a ridge overlooking Shengyerg. There we halted and through our glasses studied the white houses scattered over the hillside, each at least half a mile from its neighbour. Among them, distinguishable from the others only by its squat minaret, stood a mosque; for despite its name, which in Albanian means Saint George, Shengyerg was a Moslem village. We could detect no sign of anything untoward and so made our way quite openly down to the house which belonged to Seymour's interpreter, a schoolmaster named Shaqir. There we stopped for a midday rest and, after restoring our carbohydrates with a bottle of cherry brandy — a most welcome gift which the British Mission had sent us in greeting — attacked the lavish if starchy fare which our host presently set before us.

Shengyerg was a place of some strategic importance for it was the terminus of a motor road, at this time still blocked by

2:Edmonds T-3 (1926?) 1927 E13 Balkan Peoples
Albania E 61

The Becktashi Monastery

241 grew wheat, oats, and other cereals, as well as maize, the staple food of the poorer classes. The slopes of the hills were covered with olives, and altogether the country round Elbasan seemed "a land flowing with milk and honey". [231] Honey in the literal sense, however, is a neglected product, and is only gathered wild, though in a country like Albania, which is exceedingly rich in flowers, scientific bee-keeping ought to be a profitable adjunct to vegetable and fruit growing.

792 Excursions farther afield were made possible by the kindness of the prefect of Elbasan, Mr. Izet Dibra, who placed a Ford car at my disposal. One such excursion took me to a Becktashi, or dervish, monastery, and another to a Greek monastery, both visits proving of considerable interest. At the first we (for Mr. Nossi was with me) were received by a dignified old priest who was wearing the same kind of flowing white robes and tall white hat as the dervish I had met at Koritza. While we sat in a vine-covered arbour outside the entrance smoking cigarettes and drinking coffee he told us how the monastery had been attacked during the revolution of 1914 by adherents of the Sunni sect. The revolution was that in which Prince William of Wied, the regent, was deposed; and the Sunis are a sect of Mohammedans who hate their fellow religionists the Becktashis with a hatred only possible to religious fanatics. Under cover of the revolution they not only burned down the monastery chapel, but also arrested the old "baba" (priest) who was entertaining us, and kept him in prison

[795]

6: Shuster S-4 (no date) 1954 El Europe
Albania EGI

conference, it will be remembered, condemned both the Protestant Ecumenical Movement and the Vatican, "center of Fascism and of plots against the Slavic peoples."

The fact that the Primate, Archbishop Christopher Kissi, did not attend any of these assemblies was strongly indicative of a lack of appreciation for Communist conceptions of the role and functions of the Church. Indeed, it would have been strange if he had attended. The Orthodox Church, like all other religious bodies in Albania, had suffered from the Land Reform Law promulgated during August, 1945, which gave the Party the right to confiscate and nationalize property it has claimed elsewhere. By the close of 1948, Moslem and Orthodox ecclesiastics were completely dependent financially on the state. During the next year, the Archbishop was deposed and arrested. The government's published contention was that he "had worked against our interests and the interests of the people by collaborating with the Unitarian Church during the period of Fascist occupation." Two other prelates, Bishop Ireneo and Bishop Agathangjeli, were arrested. How many other members of the clergy have been taken into custody, deported to labor camps, or executed, no one knows. There is a report that Bishop Irenaeus Banushi was put to death during 1947.

However, the full fury of Hoxha's enmity fell upon the Roman Catholic Church. The Germans had withdrawn in November, 1944. A month later the government seized all printing establishments, and the Catholic press was abolished. At the same time a number of ecclesiastical offices were searched, and some members of the clergy were taken into custody. Religious youth organizations were banned, and only the Anti-fascist Youth Front, avowedly pro-Communist, was permitted to function. In February, 1945, the first "People's Court" to convene in Scutari sentenced one of the best known Al-

6: Shuster S-4 (no date) 1954 El Europe
Albania EG1

795 661 banian writers, the Reverend Lazarus Shanjoha, to death. He had favored close ties of friendship with Italy for many years, and so the sentence was ascribed to the National Liberation Front's fanatical detestation of all things Italian, and not to antireligious prejudice.

659 668 687 Ilya Ehrenburg, major Soviet propagandist, visited Albania during the November of 1945. Upon his return to Moscow he described Scutari, more than half the population of which was Roman Catholic, as a vicious hotbed of reaction. At the time of his visit the city was preparing for its first postwar elections. A handful of students at the diocesan seminary for the training of priests circulated mimeographed sheets urging that the recipients vote against the National Front. These sheets bore the signature of the "Albanian Union." Spurred on by Ehrenburg's denunciation, the government jailed and tortured some of the distributors. They revealed the names of the seminarians, who as a matter of fact constituted the complete membership of the Albanian Union. A spectacular trial of those held guilty of having plotted to overthrow the State with the help of "Anglo-American imperialists" became in reality a forum before which the Catholic Church was indicted for high treason. The Rector of the seminary and one of his fellow Jesuits were accused of responsibility for the conspiracy, found guilty, and executed. Others received heavy prison sentences. Nowhere else had a court acted more grimly.

659 793 661 The liquidation of virtually all Catholic activities followed swiftly, with more cruel and vengeful treatment of the clergy than has been witnessed even in Hungary and Yugoslavia. The Papal Nuncio was expelled, as were all priests and religious born in Italy. Education was reserved to the State, even nursery schools being taken from the Church. Catholic Action was suppressed. The seminaries were closed. Ecclesias-

6: Shuster S-4 (no date) 1954 El Europe
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659 The legal status of religious establishments was clarified
671 by a law dated November 26, 1949. The principal stipulations were these:

All clergymen or lay officials must be approved by the State; and any who act illegally "must be dismissed from their posts immediately."

Any communication addressed to the public by a Church official—speech, message, or pastoral letter—must be submitted in advance for censorship.

The education of youth is conducted by the State, and "religious institutions have nothing to do with it."

Religious orders were not to assume management of any hospital or other charitable institution, or to possess real property.

795 Measures taken against the Catholic minority were so bru-
661 tal that even Communist functionaries protested. At a Congress of the People's Party, held on March 31, 1952, General Hoxha sternly upbraided Tuk Jakova, one of the principal Communist Party leaders, for questioning the wisdom of the persecution. Hoxha's words, as reprinted, read in part:

> Comrade Tuk Jakova, disassociating himself from the political program of the Party and of the State in so far as religion and in particular the Catholic clergy are concerned, has not evinced the right attitude toward this clergy or acted against it vigorously. Not seeing the very grave danger which is present in the reactionary clergy, Comrade Jakova has not hated them in an adequate way.

It would therefore appear that while Mohammedanism has been spared the full rigors of the antireligious crusade in Albania, the Christian Churches have suffered as perhaps nowhere else in satellite Europe. Bereft of leadership and of education, depleted through violent death, deportation to labor camps, and escape to other countries, they have been reduced to a status almost as primitive as that of the Churches

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in the Soviet Union itself prior to the War against Hitler. They are almost wholly isolated. Information concerning the cultural life of the Albanian people is limited to what can be obtained from broadcasts over the government radio station.

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Hoxha did not join forces with Marshal Tito when that leader broke with the Kremlin, but was soon made aware that Albania was wholly isolated and that his Yugoslav neighbor gave asylum to dissidents who plotted a *coup d'état*. That such an undertaking might well meet with success seems probable. But Italy retains its interest in the strategic and economic advantages of the Albanian area, and its assent would be required; and currently, with the struggle for Trieste in the foreground, no entente is conceivable. The Russians apparently maintain a small body of troops in the vicinity of Tirana, but have in no other wise manifested great concern. Apparently they consider Hoxha a negligible problem child. It is apparent, however, that the Russian garrison makes impossible any attempt to overthrow the dictatorship from within the country.

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The fate of the three erstwhile Baltic Republics—Lithuania, Latvia, and Estonia—illustrates the sad truth that in troubled and imperialistic parts of the world it does not pay to be a small nation. Each of the three had a solid folk or tribal core round which language, mores, and religious tradition had developed. For brief periods each managed to acquire a precarious independence. But they lay along the great Baltic seacoast route from Western Europe. German colonization efforts, spearheaded by the Teutonic Knights, went this way, and later came solidly entrenched land barons. There were periods of Swedish and Polish domination. Finally, as a result of the Treaty of Nystad, which in 1721 ended the Swedish

RITUAL LIFE

[124] 162 FORTY-TWO per cent of our series was recorded as Catholic, and the rest, except for one man,[1] as Moslem. These figures reflect the approximate proportions of the 2 faiths in Ghegnia. Their territorial distribution is shown on figure 3. All of Mirdita, all of Dukagin, about half of Malsia e Madhe, most of Zadrima, and some *bairaks* of Mati, Puka, and Malsia e Jakovës are Catholic. Catholics occupy on the whole the least accessible areas, and those closest to Rome. Moslems occupy those nearest the direction of Istanbul, along the main roads, and in the vicinity of the larger towns.

795 793 While Islam is but 4 centuries old in Albania, Catholicism has been there at least 4 times as long. During the last 12 centuries many changes have taken place in the number and location of bishoprics and parishes, and in the number of communicants. At the time of our study, there was a bishop in Zadrima, to whom the parish priests of Mirdita reported; another took care of the territory north of the Drin. Some of the priests, like Father Krasnichi whom we visited in Mirdita, were native Albanians trained in Rome, others Austrians, Germans, or Italians. All were men of physical stamina and courage, for theirs was a difficult and rigorous assignment. Some were [792] Franciscans. In Zadrima, near the bishop's residence, was a nunnery with about a dozen inhabitants.

795 Many of the Moslems of northern Albania belong to an extremely heterodox brotherhood, that of the Bektashi. The tomb of the founder of the order lies in the inner recess of a long cave, really an ancient sandstone quarry, in the cliff outside the city of Cairo. His successor lives in a house at the entrance to the cave. The head of the order and all of his henchmen in residence are Albanians. The reason for this curious circumstance is that the Khedivial family of Egypt was originally Albanian, and they brought their spiritual chief, with the coffins

[1] Both parents came from Dibra. He was Greek Orthodox. how or why I could not discover.

[See cat 116, p. 35c--Analyst]

795 of his predecessors, to Cairo with them. Although for two generations the royal family has abjured the Bektashi tenets and worshipped according to Hanafi rites, the shrine and its occupants remain. Young men who wish to become dervishes go, if they are able, to Cairo,

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FIG. 3. Territorial distribution of religions.

[191] and receive their instruction at the central shrine. That is why many of the dervishes in Ghegnia spoke Arabic, and had some knowledge of other Moslem countries. Besides the [192] village dervishes, the Bektashis have a number of monasteries, located in Has and Malsia e Jakovës. We measured the abbot of one of them, who was a Has man.

795 182 Despite its centuries in Ghegnia, Catholicism has failed to change many of the customs of the mountaineers, such as the *fis* system with cross-cousin marriage, trial marriage, the levirate, blood brotherhood, and the swearing of virginity. The reason is of course that the needs which these customs fill have not been eliminated. The Moslem faith permits them and thus has become more popular. Islam is deemed the more fashionable and more civilized religion. The people of the towns, rich men, army officers, and other sophisticates are usually Moslems. Most Catholics are poor. This attitude is of course a hold-over from the period of Turkish domination. Many Albanians admired the Turks. Many spoke Turkish by preference. I recall once riding along a lane in Zadrima with my interpreter, Mr. Frasheri, who reprimanded 2 old harvesters whom we passed for talking Turkish together. Bishop Fan Noli suggests that they may have been Turkish-speaking refugees from the towns of Prizren, Peia, or Podgoritza.

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795 262 273 There is a certain dietary difference between Catholics and Moslems. The former eat pork, especially in the wintertime. The Moslems curl up their nostrils and gag at the smell of pork, and will not enter a room where it is cooking. In its place they use much mutton fat in their cooking. Catholics drink wine when they can get it; Moslems care for their alcoholic needs with *raki*. These differences are probably of no biological importance, as far as the growth and development of the individual are concerned, but they do serve to intensify the mutual antipathy of the 2 religious groups and inhibit a genetic interchange.

582 178 795 In Lura, in a population not exceeding a few hundred individuals, Catholics and Moslems intermarry. In a single household the father may be Catholic, the mother Moslem, and the children will choose their own religions. This is the only place in Ghegnia where this happens. Lura is in process of change from Catholicism to Islam. As the latter gains ground, mixed households are found. The government of Ahmed Zog made much of this isolated situation, urging other Albanians to follow the example of the Lurans in the interests of national unity.

178 795 Various stages in this process of shifting are found in different tribes and *bairaks*. In Mer-

In Mer -.

178 795 [55] turi and Nikaj, the men adopt 2 sets of names, Moslem and Christian, and employ the former while traveling to avoid trouble. They get used to these names and in many cases use them at home. In Hoti, the *bairaktar* once led his men against the invading Serbs, with the help of the Turkish government. In gratitude for his brave and successful conduct the Turks granted him special privileges, and he went over, with his family, to Islam. The rest of the *bairak* is still mostly Catholic, but the tendency in such a case is for the others to follow the leader. In Lura, where mixed families are found, the Catholics have given up keeping pigs so as not to offend the Moslems, and celebrate Moslem festivals as well as Christian ones, to avoid trouble. Very rarely a Mirdite will marry a Moslem woman from Mati, but when he does she becomes Catholic.

797 144 When the Turks introduced Islam, all Ghegs were Catholics. Almost exclusively, the change has been in the Moslem direction. Hence we may assume that almost none of the present-day Catholics bear genetic elements brought in from outside the region by the Turks or their followers, while the same is not necessarily true of the Moslem Ghegs. *Bairak* by *bairak* and tribe by tribe, as conversion progressed, the line between the 2 religions has remained, by and large, a marital barrier. During the whole period of the Turkish rule, Catholics have furthermore been able to travel much less widely than Moslems, with resultant genetic implications.

771 In Albania one frequently hears the remark that "the Albanians are not very religious." This is usually said with pride, for the presence of 3 religions in so small a country is deemed a dangerous impediment to political unity. In one sense, the remark is quite true. Few Albanians are religious fanatics; few of them worry about their spiritual salvation. Most of the Catholics go to church with some regularity, and most of the Moslems keep Ramadan. However, their ancient way of life provides most of the ritual which they need to tide them over emotional crises, so that church and mosque are in many ways superfluous. A 771 596 man's first loyalty is to his "blood," that is, his extended family. He spends much of his time, effort, and material goods keeping the family together and avenging any deed which has up-